

EDITORIALS

THE FIFTY-FIRST ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MEDICAL SOCIETY OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

The 1922 meeting of the Medical Society of the State of California, held in Yosemite Valley, May 15 to 18, was a success. This from whatever angle one cares to review it.

Socially, the spirit of good-fellowship, companionship and cordiality was splendid as between members, their families and guests. The hospitality and spirit of co-operation of the officers and staffs of the Government, the hotels and transportation companies, deserved and secured much praise. Many persons visiting the Yosemite Valley for the first time were converted into future friends and patrons of its beauty and hospitality.

In spite of the truly wonderful and varied outdoor attractions that invited one on every side, the attendance at all meetings was gratifying and the program was carried out with but minor changes. The program covered an exceedingly wide range of subjects, including public health, clinical medicine, pathology, research, and medical economics.

Over two hundred papers were read. These manuscripts aggregate over 4000 pages of type-written matter, or, with the discussions, nearly two million words. Printed in ordinary type this would represent about two volumes the size of Osler's text book on medicine.

The most important feature of these statistics, to our members and to the Editor of the Journal, is that it would take over two years to publish all of these papers in the Journal even if every one of the reading pages in every issue were to be utilized exclusively for the purpose.

It is obvious that the Editorial Staff of the Journal has an arduous task in examining all of these manuscripts, as well as the unpleasant and difficult task of selecting from so many good papers the ones that it is possible to use in the Journal before the next meeting of the Society.

The papers presented, both in the General Sessions and in the fourteen Sections, were unusually good; and consequently, the scientific interest and "atmosphere" was kept upon a high plane throughout the meeting.

The important matters acted upon by the Council and House of Delegates will be considered in the July issue of the Journal.

PATENT MEDICINE FRAUDS INCREASING

The advertising columns of some newspapers are beginning to look like they did before Samuel Hopkins Adams' "Great American Fraud Articles" and before the clean advertising organizations began to be effective.

Taking advantage of the general instability of the social and economic conditions, many of the

old frauds that have not been in evidence for many years, as well as many new ones, are taking large space and are making the usual fraudulent claims. The testimonial writer is with us again and many others of the oldtime methods once thought to be destroyed are out again in full force.

The following advertisements illustrate this point:

"Hurry Mother! Even a sick child loves the 'fruity' taste of California 'Fig Syrup.'" Many people have forgotten that "Syrup of Figs" contained 6 per cent of alcohol and that its active principle is not figs but senna, a cheap and well-known drug.

"Pape's Cold Compound" was exposed in nostrums and quackery more than ten years ago, when its analysis showed it to contain: Acetanilid, 1.6 grains (a cheap, powerful and dangerous coal-tar heart depressant); phenolphthalein, 1.8 grains (a well known and cheap laxative); sugar, 8 grains.

Many cheap cocktails of other days that have been exposed and all but forgotten are again advertising. The alcohol content that formerly was printed in exceedingly small type is now carried in a way to be easily read.

THOMAS CLAY EDWARDS

In his presidential address, John H. Graves, among other serious and important messages to the physicians and citizens of California, called particular attention to the duties, responsibilities and importance of the work of the general practitioner.

The same theme ran like a golden thread through the discussions and atmosphere of the Fifty-first Annual Convention of the State Medical Society to such an extent that one distinguished member suggested an editorial on the rediscovery of the family physician.

This happy spirit fittingly prepared the way for the unanimous election of Thomas Clay Edwards as President-elect of the State Society.

Doctor Edwards is from Monterey County, and has been engaged in general practice in the small city of Salinas for nearly forty years.

Health Insurance—Group Medicine (Minutes, House of Delegates, A. M. A., address of Speaker) —Compulsory health insurance never will and never can become an American institution. As our campaign of public education broadens, this fantastic, un-American machination and the fancies of its proponents will fail to arrest legislative attention and consideration or draw unto it public demand and support. There are other forms of medical practice, instigated, conducted and extended by individuals; groups and health and lay agencies that encroach on and mitigate against the interests of the individual doctor. Some of them merit endorsement and support. Others, however, require our emphatic and perhaps drastic denouncement. They are dependent, for success and extension, on the members of our profession. Regretfully we recognize that many physicians, thoughtful only of self, place their services at the command of such agencies. Such practices must not be condoned.—Journal A. M. A., May 27, 1922.